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AUTHOR Rosenblat, Marilyn L.: And Others
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ABSTRACT

Written for classroom teachers grades K-12, this reference guide on the Iroquois Indians provides an overview of history, religion, and culture and points out contributions of the Iroquois people. Concentrating on chronological history, the guide begins with formation of the Iroquois Confederacy (later a League of Six Nations) and continues after arrival of the white man with the role of the Iroquois in the French and Indian War, Revolutionary War, and during the postrevolutionary period. In a section on Iroquois culture, the guide covers traditional religion and kinship and family systems (the clan), and gives a physical description of a typical village. Current locations of Iroquois homelands in the U.S. and Canada are listed, and a brief description on occupations looks at traditional occupations for men and women and job trends today. There are sections on communication (listening, storytelling, learning, wampum, pictographs, Condolence Cane), schools, travel, recreation (Iroquois contribution of Lacrosse), arts and crafts, and music. Assimilation of the Indian is briefly discussed, and a longer section traces the history of government policies regarding Indians, with specific examples of land issues affecting Indians. A final section mentions Indian contributions, particularly those of the Iroquois. The guide has a teacher reference bibliography, Indian interest organizations list, and instructional aids available. (RS)

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A REFERENCE GUIDE

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We acknowledge with deep gratitude our many generations of old people who have passed on the knowledge that is so briefly presented in this unit.

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DEDICATION

We dedicate this unit to all Iroquois people with hope that all unborn generations of children will benefit from our work.

THE IROQUOIS PEOPLE

Statement of Problem - For centuries governments have denigrated the stature and rights of the Iroquois. Most of his lands have been confiscated, and the Indian has been pushed aside to live on reservations or survive in towns and cities. The Iroquois have been engaged in a continuing struggle to preserve their culture and traditions.

INTRODUCTION

The Iroquois Indian has contributed greatly to American society. All the land centered around what we now consider the Niagara Frontier was once the home of the Indian. His people alone can qualify as the original inhabitants. When the first Europeans arrived, the Iroquois were in the midst of their own great civilization and possessed one of the highest forms of government in the world. The League of the Iroquois Confederacy was the most influential Indian alliance in all North America. Without the assistance of the Indians, the first settlers would never have survived.

It is the purpose of this resource unit to present the classroom teacher, grades K-12, with a wealth of information about the Iroquois people. This unit has concentrated on the chronological history of the Iroquois Nations which is indigenous to the Niagara Frontier area. The material contained in this resource unit should be incorporated into the school program. It is anticipated that this unit will foster a better understanding of the Indian and provide an opportunity to study Indian culture in order to identify positively with the unique background and contributions of the Iroquois people.

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide teachers with an overview of the history, religion, and culture of the Iroquois people.
2. To stimulate an interest in the contributions made by the Iroquois people.
3. To provoke an understanding of how natural environment has affected the Iroquois people and their way of life.
4. To stimulate an objective analysis of the problems of the Iroquois people.

HISTORY OF THE IROQUOIS PEOPLE

Formation of the Confederacy

The Indian is the original inhabitant of the American continents. Nations of diverse languages and customs occupied all of territorial North America. The Northeastern forestland region was occupied by many Nations for varying lengths of time. A long series of wars and migrations resulted in the occupation of this region by five nations - The Mohawks, Cayugas, Oneidas, Onondagas and the Senecas. Members of these nations refer to themselves as the Ongweoweh (The Real People) or the Hou-den-no-shaun-nee (People of the Longhouse). These nations joined in an alliance for peace which is called the Iroquois Confederacy. They have a code of laws which is known as the "Great Peace" (Kayane-reh-go-wah). Although we cannot determine the date of the formation of the Ho-den-no-shaun-nee, it was before the coming of the white man. The circumstances surrounding the inception of the Confederacy are preserved by tradition in great detail.

The formation of the Confederacy has a religious as well as a political significance. The Confederacy established peace among the five nations. The Iroquois believe that this "Great Peace" was the will of the Creator because it came at a time when harmony and balance among men were threatened.

The story of the Great Peace Maker and Hiawatha, the founders of the League of the Five Nations, is one of the most cherished in the heritage of the Iroquois. To the Iroquois, the Great Peace Maker was a prophet destined to carry the message of peace to his people. The aid of Hiawatha was enlisted by the Great Peace Maker for his mission and together they were able to carry out the plan of the Great Creator.

The Great Creator inspired the Great Peace Maker with a set of laws to bind the nations together into a cohesive unit, based upon peace and a restoration of health in mind and body.

Within the laws of the League are contained the ideas of initiative (popular nomination), referendum, recall, and woman suffrage. Decisions of the confederate council, composed of 50 chieftains, must be unanimous. This insures that issues are communicated, discussed, and resolved by all council members. Each nation, therefore, has a veto power over all other nations (3,43).

The Iroquois hoped to bring about universal peace by providing for the inclusion of other nations in the Confederacy. Many Indian nations, from the St. Lawrence to Florida, participated in the League while retaining their own identity as nations. The most notable addition to the League was the Tuscarora, a nation which had migrated to New York from North Carolina in the early 18th century. After the inclusion of the Tuscaroras, they became known as the League of Six Nations.

The formation of the League made the Iroquois Confederacy the most powerful Indian alliance in eastern North America. Turned from internal strife, they united in spreading the philosophy of the League to outside nations. Peace, as a way of life, was maintained through the will of the people with no need of a standing army.

Arrival of the White Man

and

French and Indian War

With the arrival of the white man on the North American continent, the Iroquois were confronted with a different and destructive set of values. To the Indian, land and its bounty were to be shared and he was unprepared for the European concept of land title and ownership. Fur trade with the Europeans brought a new material wealth and life style to the Indian such as iron kettles, loomed fabrics, etc. Settlers came in increasing numbers bringing with them different religious convictions and unfamiliar goods such as alcohol and guns. At first the white man was welcomed, then, as the numbers grew, the Indian resisted the encroachment of white settlers upon their territories.

In the subsequent struggle between the English and French for control of the North American continent (French and Indian Wars), Iroquois support controlled the outcome of the wars. Champlain had set the scene through his initial mistake of allying the French with the Algonquins (Algonquin territory overlapped Iroquois territory in the St. Lawrence area). Friendships between the Indian and trusted individuals who represented European countries resulted in different allegiances within the Iroquois Nations. Later, through the efforts of Sir William Johnson, many Iroquois continued to support the English. As the head of the Northern Indian Department for the English government, Johnson had won the loyalty and respect of the Iroquois Nations. He assured the Confederacy a fair treatment by the English in return for their much needed support in battle against the French.

After their victory over the French, largely through the efforts of the Iroquois, the British government issued a proclamation in 1763. White settlers were directed to withdraw from the area of the Appalachian Mountains, and future land purchases were prohibited. This effort was to win over those tribes that had aided the French during the wars, and insure the Appalachian Mountains for the Indian. Despite the apparent intentions of the proclamation, white settlers continued to steal Indian land. Government agents began negotiating treaties almost immediately with the Indians. As a result of these treaties, the white settlers took part of this region. In succeeding treaties, the British government continued the land grab against the Indian (32,38).

THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

The Revolutionary War had a profound influence on the Iroquois relations with the white man. The Iroquois were under constant pressure from both the colonists and the English Government to support their side or remain neutral. The colonists who had invaded Indian lands despite the Proclamation of 1763, now found it expedient to cease their encroachment on Indian territory in order to secure Indian support against the English. Unable to become of "one mind", the Confederacy "covered their fire" in the ensuing war and the Nations decided that the individuals would exercise their personal freedom in determining their support in the conflict. Many Tuscaroras and Oneidas sided with the colonists, and were the ones to feed Washington's troops at Valley Forge. Many Mohawks and other Iroquois factions, under the leadership of Joseph Brant, supported the British. This group participated in the Cherry Valley Massacre of 1778. In the following year, a reprisal by Sullivan against the Six Nations angered the Nations who had held to neutrality. The purpose of the Sullivan Raid was mostly to burn villages and destroy crops. The soldiers destroyed thousands of bushels of corn, burned fields of vegetables and cut down thousands of fruit trees. The raid was an indiscriminate attack upon neutral villages. This served to antagonize the neutral Nations of the Iroquois and subsequently the entire border was brought under fire.

POST - REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

With the restoration of peace in 1783, no provision was made by the British to secure concessions for their Indian allies. A tract of land extending six miles on each side of the Grand River in Ontario, was formally granted to Brant and the pro-British Iroquois. However, the Iroquois living within the new republic were abandoned by the British.

During this period, the presence of the Indian affected the international relations of the United States and Britain. The Jay Treaty (1794) contains a provision which guaranteed all Indians on either side of the existing boundary free passage by land or inland navigation into the respective British and American territories. Article II of this treaty, reaffirmed in 1775, also designated that this passage should be free of any import or duty on personal goods or effects.

In the ensuing years, treaty after treaty depleted the holdings of the Iroquois Nations. Although the disposition of the land was opposed by prominent Indians such as Red Jacket and Joseph Brant, little could be done to stem this tide.

Many Mohawks relocated in Canada and some at the trading settlement at Akwesasne near what is now Massena.

The Oneidas yielded large sections of land near present day Utica throughout the remainder of the century, until their original possessions were narrowed to one small reservation. A portion of this nation emigrated to areas in Canada and to what is now Green Bay, Wisconsin.

The Tuscaroras, having been forced from Oneida territory, relocated on a tract granted to them by the Senecas near the Niagara River at what is now Lewiston.

The Onondagas were also forced to relinquish some of their lands to the State, but were able to retain some land in the Onondaga Valley near Syracuse.

The Cayugas were forced to surrender their lands located between Rochester and Syracuse or be exterminated as the tide of foreign population began to encircle them. In 1795, they ceded by treaty all their lands to the State and were forced to find new lands on the Western Frontier.

The territories of the Senecas included Western New York and Pennsylvania. These were reduced by fraudulent means in order to placate demands of the white man. President George Washington, in a speech to the Senecas in 1790, promised government protection with respect to the just disposition of Indian land. However, the Senecas were induced by land speculators to concede their lands. At a council held in 1797 at Big Tree on the Genesee River, 4,000,000 acres in Western and Central New York were sold to Robert Morris, a land speculator, for \$100,000 or about $2\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ per acre. Morris subsequently made an exorbitant profit on the sale of the land. This transaction was actualized despite the strong opposition of Red Jacket and other Seneca chiefs.

During the War of 1812, the Iroquois once again faced the choice of allying themselves with the British or American forces. Some Iroquois joined Tecumseh, a Shawnee, and his confederation in aiding the British. These Indians had responded to the British promise of an exclusively Indian state or territory to be fixed between the Canadian and American borders. However, the negotiations which preceded the signing of the Treaty of Ghent in 1814, once again saw the British fail to support their Indian allies. The buffer state proposal was dropped and the Treaty only restored to the Indian the territories they had occupied just prior to the war (12,31,33).

During the nineteenth century, Seneca territory was further depleted as a result of the dealings with the Ogden Land Company. In 1826, this company successfully secured land in the Genesee Valley. A later transaction, in 1838, gave the Ogden Company claim to all Seneca lands in the State. The Senecas, however, resisted the ratification of this transaction on the grounds that fraudulent means had been used to obtain it. After a long litigation, a compromise transaction was made in 1842. As a result of this the Ogden Land Company relinquished back to the Senecas the lands on which the Allegheny and Cattaraugus reservations are located. The present Tonawanda Reservation was purchased by a group of Seneca Indians from the Ogden Land Company prior to the 1842 compromise to provide themselves with legal land holdings that could not be challenged by outside interests (34,45).

IROQUOIS CULTURE

Traditional Religion

Religion acts as the underlying force in the lives of the Iroquois. It places enormous responsibility upon man and strongly emphasizes mutual responsibilities of creatures toward each other.

All creative power is ascribed to the Great Creator. He created the animal and vegetable world, and adapted the elements to carry out an omniscient supervision of the world and affairs of man. To the Great Creator the Indian renders thanks and homage for the gifts of Mother Earth and addresses prayers to insure the continuance of His protecting care.

"Our Mother", The Earth

"It is our belief that in the beginning, when the world was all water, the Creator gave us his daughter, then she became our land. Different parts of her body became the Sun, Moon and Stars. She is, indeed, a great 'lady'. In the Spring, when she awakens, many things grow. There are things to eat and beautiful things to look at. We thank our creator that these things are possible. It is time for us to plant, for our mother is ready for them. She has been resting all winter, just as we rest at night.

The Summer rains come and wash our mother's body so she will be clean and smell fresh. The summer comes and we give thanks to our three sisters, who give us life: corn, beans and squash. We have a lot to be thankful for; the Creator taught us to plant. We take care of the plants and they take care of us. In Autumn, she is getting ready for the long winter, but she still makes us happy. Our mother is very beautiful when the leaves change to many different colors; then they fall. The leaves will keep her warm for the winter. All our little brothers are getting ready for winter. The tree people gather the nuts for storage, so they'll have food all winter. Some of our sky brothers journey to the south, where it is warm. The animals that remain have been left for food. Our mother is always thinking of us.

Today many of us try to protect our mother, but the number of offenses are too great. Our mother is dying along with her children. She cannot breathe the air, drink the water or see the sun. We have taken more from her than we have put back. We must help our mother get well again."¹

The Iroquois, furthermore, believe in the spirit of all things, which were never objects of worship, but regarded merely as unseen assistants of the Great Creator enabling Him to administer the affairs of man with more ease and convenience.

¹ Author, Skaroniate "Over the Clouds", Ronald LaFrance

The Iroquois, in prosperity and adversity, realize their dependancy on the Great Creator and believe that his divine power through nature has rendered all that is needed to attain fulfillment in life. It is the responsibility of the individual to discover and consume only that which he needs from his environment, thus maintaining harmony with nature. Prayers always take the form of thanksgiving for the continued bounty of the earth. The seven regular festivals or thanksgivings observed annually at specific times of the year, are suggested by seasonal changes. Ceremonies are handed down from generation to generation and festival activities continue anywhere from one day to a week or longer.

The most important festival is the Mid-Winter Ceremonies, the renewal of the cycles of life. The Maple Festival is held in early spring in thanksgiving for the sweet water of the Maple. Next comes the Planting Festival, an invocation to the Great Creator to bless the seeds. Thanksgiving for the first fruit of the season is given with the observance of the Strawberry Festival. The Bean Festival which acknowledges the ripening of beans is followed by the Green Corn Festival. The three sisters; corn, beans and squash are often grouped together under the name of "Our Life Supporters". The Harvest Festival is celebrated in thanksgiving for the gathering of crops (45).

Respect for the dead is a significant element of Iroquois culture. The soul is believed to be immortal and upon death, will travel on to the abode of the Great Creator, while the body returns to Mother Earth. The spirit of the deceased hovers over the body for a certain length of time before it departs on its journey to find permanent rest with the Great Creator. At the funeral, the people are told to redirect to the living all the love and respect once rendered to the deceased. A period of mourning for the deceased extends for ten days and a feast is held on the tenth day and also on the first anniversary of death. At this time, the deceased's worldly goods are distributed and the distribution becomes law. This is the recognized legal procedure of the Six Nations. A custom prevailed in ancient times of capturing a bird and releasing it over the grave on the evening of burial to bear away the spirit to its heavenly rest. It is believed that during this journey the soul has the same physical needs of its former life, therefore, explaining the custom of burying food, tools and weapons with the deceased.

By the end of the 18th century, the Indian was caught between the tide of the white man's culture and his own. Communication was inhibited by language differences. Also, the material aspects of the western European culture presented the Indian people with social ills that they had never previously experienced. It was the time when a reaffirmation of the message of "Great Peace" was desperately needed.

It was June 1800, when a Seneca, Gan-yo-di-yoh (Handsome Lake), received the second message called Gaiiwio (The Good Message). This message was not a new religion, but a supplement to the ancient existing religion (The Great Peace).

Gan-yo-di-yoh spoke of the evils which the non-Indians brought to his people and which had made them forget their responsibilities to their families, children and communities. He told the people to repent these bad ways of the non-Indian and return to the way of the Longhouse (the traditional religion). He spoke of the next life, warning his people of the hard times ahead for all people of the world. His teachings renewed faith for some Indian people in the traditional way of life (45).

Traditional Kinship and Family Systems

The clan is the true identity of Iroquois Indians; it is the factor in knowing who they are. It is composed of many families of equal importance. Included in the clan are all who are biologically related through matrilineal blood line. In the past, father, mother and children were referred to as the "Fireside Family" since they occupied a common compartment and shared the central fire in the longhouse. Since descent is traced through the mother's lineage, membership in the clan is restricted to the mother and children with the father retaining his membership in the clan of his birth.

A clan is named after an animal which acts as its guarding spirit, i.e., Deer, Wolf, Snipe, Heron, Hawk, Bear, Beaver, Turtle, Eel. Indians who belong to a common clan are considered relatives regardless of the nation in which they have membership or the territory they inhabit, i.e., members of the Wolf Clan of the Mohawks are relatives of the Wolf Clan of the Senecas. Since they consider themselves of the same bloodline, members of the same clan are not encouraged to marry.

A woman acts as head of the clan and is referred to as the "Clan Mother". Among her designated functions are: the appointment and removal of Confederacy Chiefs; the setting up and approval of marriages, the supervision, the planting, cultivation, and harvesting of crops. In addition, one of the important duties of the Clan Mother is that of holding names possessed by the clan. Indian children receive from their clan mothers a hereditary clan name. A child cannot be given a name that is already possessed by a living clan member. Upon death, the name is returned to the clan to be reused. However, the bearer of a name is expected to carry the name with honor or the name can be revoked.

The Indian today does not always live in close proximity to the members of his clan. This is especially true of the Indian of the city. In many cases, he has become so far removed from his clan, that he is unaware of it.

The Village

The Iroquois resided in villages located in the vicinity of rivers, lakes and streams. They were usually built upon high land as a protective measure against enemy attack. These villages were occupied for a period of ten to twenty years depending on the fertility of the land and abundance of game. Each village was surrounded by a towering wall or palisade of logs which often has a deep trench dug around the outside to insure protection.

Villages differed in that some contained only a few houses while others had as many as a hundred. Nevertheless, the basic pattern was always identical in that the village stood in the heart of the clearing surrounded by the cultivated fields. For the majority, a cluster of large houses referred to as longhouses, served as living quarters and were spaced uniformly over an open area.

Longhouses were elongated dwellings subdivided to accommodate a number of families of the same clan. The frame of the longhouse was constructed of logs set upright into the ground, fastened by crosspoles and shingled with elm bark. At the ends of the house were doors, either of bark with hinges of wood, or of deer or bear skins suspended from the opening. Over one of these doors, the clan symbol of the residing families was carved. There were no windows in the longhouse.

Each section contained a central fire which accommodated two families, one on either side. On both sides, wide seats made of bark were arranged and extended about two feet from the ground along the length of the longhouse. Mats and skins were spread on these shelves which were employed as seats during the day and beds at night. A similar shelf was constructed approximately five feet above the lower ones to provide storage space for family possessions. The winter supply of corn was hung on crosspoles near the roof and dried corn and beans were stored within bark barrels in the small vestibules at either end of the house.

Surplus corn, beans and other staples were stored in a root cellar within the village. The bottom and sides were covered with bark and a water-tight bark roof was constructed to cover the surplus food after it was deposited.

The Iroquois were extremely conscious of personal cleanliness habits. The care, health and respect of one's own body is an integral part of Iroquois culture. Each village usually contained a dome-shaped lodge, which was employed for steam bathing. The interior was filled with steam created by pouring water over heated stones. The lodge played an important role in the process of physical and spiritual purification. The collecting of refuse in a pit outside of the village was practiced as a sanitary measure (40).

INDIAN TERRITORIES TODAY

After 480 years, the "Great Turtle Continent" (western hemisphere) has accepted many people from all parts of the world. "The Real People" still remain in this area known as North, Central and South America. Since the "Real People" are the original proprietors of this land, other governments have no claim to Indian lands which have been called "reservations".

Indian people respect Mother Earth, therefore their land reflects their belief. Indian land in New York State is a home for wildlife, game, and all beings of the natural world.

In New York State the remaining Iroquois homelands are located:

Akwesasne Mohawk (St. Regis)	near Massena
Onondaga Nation	near Syracuse
Tonawanda Seneca	near Akron
Tuscarora	near Niagara Falls
Seneca	Cattaraugus near Gowanda
Seneca	Allegheny near Salamanca

Other Iroquois lands are located near Montreal, Quebec, Peterborough, London and Brantford, Ontario; and in Wisconsin and Oklahoma.

Iroquois people live throughout the land. Some of the Iroquois people do not live on reserves. The United States Census Bureau presently lists Indian people in a classification of ethnic background, which they designate as "others". For this reason it is impossible to accurately ascertain the number of Indians residing in Urban Areas.

OCCUPATIONS

Within the Iroquois World, the division of labor was clearly evident. As in many societies, the woman's work tended to be near the home while the man's work took him away from the village.

Hunting took precedence as the major occupation of the Iroquois male. The men were responsible for the defense of the village. During the winter the Iroquois man concentrated on crafts producing weapons, tools, cooking utensils, wampum belts, equipment used for games and other needed articles. He also built longhouses, stockades, cleared the land for planting and mined flint from quarries.

The Iroquois society was primarily agrarian with women performing such duties as planting and cultivating. In addition, they prepared food for cooking and practiced the art of food preservation, treated and prepared materials used to make clothing, and worked as potters and basket-makers. Elderly people were respected members of the community. One of their most important responsibilities was to teach the young. All activities depended upon a cooperative effort. Emphasis was always placed on the welfare of the group, rather than on competition and individual success.

The jobs held today by Indian men and women are influenced by factors similar to those of any other individual. Positions are dependent on ability, interest and educational background. A man may work in an office, on construction or in a factory and may still be an honored chief of his nation. An Indian woman may be a teacher, nurse, office worker, or cook and yet, in her own culture may be a Clan Mother. There are few who farm as a means of support, although there is a definite trend to return to farming today. However, most residents of reservations work in urban areas.

TRAVEL

The principal villages of the Iroquois were connected by well-traveled trails. The main trail ran between the land of the Mohawks and the territory of the Senecas. These trails which connected the main settlements of the Five Nations were less than eighteen inches wide. These well-traveled trails had been worn down as much as twelve inches. The trails were later followed by the white traders and trappers, and then by missionaries and settlers. Most trails today are major roads in our state highway system.

Taking precedence as the speediest and quickest mode of travel, was the canoe constructed of smoothed oak or birch bark which had been soaked and then stitched to a hickory or ash frame. The canoe varied in size from twelve feet for a two-man canoe, to forty feet for a boat which could hold thirty men. The birch bark canoes served as a swift means of travel along the many rivers and lakes.

Travel in the deep snows was virtually impossible without the aid of snow shoes which were used on the hunt or other expeditions undertaken during the winter. Two kinds of snow shoes were designed, one for heavy and one for light snow.

COMMUNICATION

Oral communication is an intrinsic element in Indian life. The way to listen is an equally important aspect of oral tradition. You must listen well to understand; you do not interrupt.

From childhood, an Indian is exposed to the art of oratory at civic, social and religious gatherings. This art was developed through announcements, public ridicule, war preparations and action recitals, in peace negotiations with other nations, in religious ceremonies, social meetings and nation council meetings.

In council you are never to formulate arguments while a person is speaking as you might miss an important part of the reasoning. You then give it back to be sure of your understanding. Then you analyze from your knowledge to develop further reasoning or be in agreement.

Oral communication is also an important factor in good mental health; to reason and counsel; to become of one mind and one heart.

Most instruction is informal. Children begin to learn how to listen at a very early age when they hear the legends of their history and the many stories of their people.

Story telling is a major means for teaching morality, religious concepts and social values. The stories and legends are spoken and heard many, many times. Through this constant exchange of listening and telling, your history becomes yours and cannot be taken from you.

Children also learn from watching others who are more skillful - and by asking questions. They are then encouraged to do and learn from their mistakes and through experience.

Some instruction is formal, i.e., the teaching of ceremonial songs, prayers and recitations, social rules, civil laws and historical legends. This information is transmitted by older members to the young, from generation to generation.

The observation of the natural world is a critical aspect of learning in the Indian culture. This requires the recall of all conditions in order to learn such things as the habits of animals for hunting, the times for planting and harvesting, weather forecasting and, in the past, the relation of stars to find one's way as there were no other referents. The awareness of the inter-relationship of all life and the care that is required to live with the natural world is the underlying basis of Indian knowledge.

The basic philosophy of Indian education is that learning never stops; you never know it all and there is no such thing as an expert. You learn something new each day from every person. Each individual has some gift to share, be it a smile, artistic talent, or outstanding reasoning capabilities.

The use of wampum, which Indians produced from shells, is an important custom among the Iroquois. Wampum as a method of communication, has religious as well as governmental significance. Wampum belts and strings are used as a means of recording events, sending messages, and binding agreements. The Nations of the Confederacy employ wampum in all their political agreements, and thus the belts become public records kept by an Onondaga Sachem (chief) who is referred to as "Keeper of the Wampum".

Several historical belts are still in existence. The Hiawatha Belt, the oldest known belt, recorded the formation of the Iroquois League. Another, the Washington Covenant Belt, represented the agreement between the Thirteen Colonies and Six Nations of the Iroquois. The William Penn Belt, was presented to the founder of Pennsylvania in 1682 in commemoration of a treaty. Most of these historical belts are in the Albany Museum and the Six Nations are currently trying to recover them.

Indian pictographs are a means of communication just as designs on the wampum are a method of commemorating great events. Designs on rocks depicted significant events which occurred in that area.

The Condolence Cane used during the installation of a chief is a cane with pictures carved into it. Each picture calls to mind a portion of the ceremony; these function as mnemonic devices.

SCHOOLS

Most Indian children attend public or private schools in Buffalo, Silver Creek, Gowanda, Niagara-Wheatfield or any neighboring town or city nearest their reservation. Courses of study are based upon curriculum prescribed by the state and local boards of education with little relation to Indian life and culture. In many of the non-reservation schools, Indian heritage is not taught at all. Some school systems such as Buffalo, New York, are presently revising their curricula in order to attempt to satisfactorily meet the needs of Indian children. The Indians want accurate information regarding their culture to be taught to today's youth.

There are two reservation schools in the western half of New York State, one on the Tuscarora and one on the Onondaga Reservations. The facilities are integrated, and Indian culture and language are now being stressed in the curriculum.

Some Indian parents are realizing that their children are losing their cultural heritage through educational assimilation, and have attempted to prevent this loss of identity by forming groups to keep the Indian culture alive. Many Indians also wish to control their own institutions of education. The Mohawk Nation at Akwesasne (St. Regis) have already established their own independent Community School, The Indian Way School, (Onk-we-hon-we-ne-ha).

Many Iroquois students are interested in continuing their education. The Peter Doctor Memorial Scholarship Fund has been established for high school graduates wishing to attend college. An organization called the North American Indian Club of Buffalo provides scholarships for some of Buffalo's Indian high school graduates who wish to further their education. There are many other opportunities available for prospective students.

Recent years have seen the development of Native American programs throughout the United States at the university level of education. A Native American Studies program (American Studies) at SUNY at Buffalo offers several courses on the history, contemporary problems and legal status of Native People. The program is under the direction of a group of Native People which includes an Onondaga Sachem chief.

RECREATION

Sports and games play a significant part in the life of the Iroquois people and are held as a source of enjoyment for both men and women. They also serve a religious purpose. The games are a major part of religious festivals. Most sports are team oriented in which cooperative effort is mandatory and the emphasis is always placed on team victory rather than on individual glory. When the white man came, he had no concept of team sports. This is one of the great gifts from the Indian to his white brothers.

The sport Lacrosse, was named by the French who likened the racket used to play the game to a bishop's crozier. This game is played with a long stick which has a small leather net-like bag attached to its end, and a small hard ball made of deerskin. Two goals are set up several hundred yards apart and the game's objective is to drive the ball, without touching it with the hands, under the goal of the opposite side. The participants in the past consisted of two nations or settlements of anywhere from eight to several hundred players per side. Today, Lacrosse is a national sport of Canada.

A popular winter sport among the Iroquois Nations is snow snake, a game played with smooth, flexible maple sticks. Since construction of the snake is an art, a good stick is cherished by the owner. The object of the game is to slide the stick on a prepared track along the ice or frozen ground. The contestant who slides the stick farthest is the winner. The longest recorded throw was about two miles.

Games of chance and gambling take their place among the favorite pastimes of the Indian. Many variations of dice games are played with bones, deer buttons or peach stones. By established custom, the peach stone game is played on the last day of certain festivals.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

The Iroquois Indian uses materials from his immediate environment to create works of art. This art takes the form of clothing, tools, weapons, utensils, ornaments and decorations. The arts and crafts are more than decorative for they sometimes have deep religious meaning. The use of certain materials, designs and colors is of great importance in Indian art.

There are many skilled craftsmen among the Indian people. Many talented Indians earn their livelihood by handicrafts. Various nations specialize in crafts unique to their particular nation. Some Indians still specialize in turning flint points into exquisite jewelry. Wood carving is also a popular Iroquois art.

The arts of basketmaking, bead making, silver smithing and pottery are being revived. The Mohawks, for example, are known to be basketmakers, producing two distinct styles of baskets: sweet grass and ash. On the Six Nation's Reservation in Brantford, Ontario, Indians create and sell Iroquois pottery patterned according to original Iroquois designs.

There is a renewed interest among the Indians to create cornhusk dolls as their ancestors did. These dolls are made faceless because of the belief that only the Creator can make a face.

Many Indians have captured on canvas the main themes of early Indian life, folklore and other aspects of culture. The Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences and the Smithsonian Institute have on exhibit, work by Indian artists.

MUSIC

For the Indian, music is in everything with which he comes into contact in his daily life. The trees, streams, breezes and animals sing for him.

In appreciation of the Creator's gifts and as a means of communication, instruments are made which copy the sounds of nature. Instruments frequently used are:

- The water drum - used in many ceremonies and social gatherings
- Turtle rattle and gourd rattle - used only in ceremonies
- Horn rattle and bark rattle - used in ceremonies and social dances
- Wood flute - used simply for listening pleasure, occasionally for dances
- Stretched skin - used for dances
- Indian whistle - used for listening pleasure

Social dancing is widely enjoyed. Indian singing societies travel many places and enjoyment continues to be spread, as many people listen and often dance to old and new music of the Indian.

The singing which accompanies the traditional music can be either words or sounds. The vocal portions are taught by a head singer.

ASSIMILATION

Today assimilation of the Indian is an issue of concern. Some Indians have become assimilated by totally adopting the values of the dominant society. Others have chosen to follow their own given way.

To the Indian, whose standard of living is spiritual rather than material, assimilation means: loss of cultural heritage and identity; detribalization and dispersion; confiscation of remaining Indian lands, exploitation of natural resources; and the termination of treaty rights and guarantees.

Those factors which promoted assimilation are:

1. Government legislation aimed at breaking up tribes, identifying Indians as wards of the state; and weakening of tribal councils.
2. Education in formal schools offering courses of instruction totally unrelated to Indian culture by teachers not knowledgeable in the Indian way of life.

3. World Wars I and II resulting in Indians being drafted against their will; mixing in a non-Indian world. Some returned to the reservations with the forces of technology following them. Others, who left the reservations to work in war plants and shipyards, remained in the cities.
4. Colonial imperialism and its resultant attitudes toward Indians which became the base for cultural genocide in the Americas. These attitudes reinforced the dominant society's belief that assimilation was the solution to the Indian problem.
5. The missionary movement leading to assimilation, in that salvation necessitated an adoption of the white man's value system. In addition, the government enforced restrictions on native American religions.

The Indian can never be totally assimilated. Many Indians maintain their traditions and resist measures imposed by non-Indians. There is however, a growing awareness in American society that cultural diversity is consonant with human fulfillment (7, 11).

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

The relationship of the government with the Indian Nations reflects a course of constantly altering programs.

During the 19th century, the Federal government had a policy of treatying with various Indian Nations for the ceding of territory. However, a policy of removal was still practiced. A supreme court decision was rendered in favor of observing the treaty rights guaranteed to the Indians during President Jackson's term. Jackson however, refused to enforce the decision and under his administration the removal of the Cherokee took place. This incident was the infamous "Trail of Tears."

In 1887 the Dawes General Allotment Act was initiated by non-Indian people who sought methods for improving the social and economic status of the Indian. The law was tailored to hasten assimilation by bringing an end to tribal ownership of land. Next to the Jackson policy, this was one of the most insidious attacks on Indian territories. All nations were affected except for the Iroquois and some Southwestern Nations who rejected the act. In 1887, approximately 138 million acres were held by Indians. Reservations were surrendered and divided among individuals and each adult received 160 acres and each child, 80 acres. The allotted lands were to be held in trust for 25 years by the United States Government; the Indian was then granted outright ownership and permitted to sell the land if he so desired.

Reservation acreage that remained after the allotments was considered "surplus" and offered for sale to non-Indians. In 1887 approximately 138 million acres were held by Indians but under this Act, 90 million acres passed into white ownership.

It was expected that because each Indian would have his own land, he would become an industrious farmer. However, individual skills or tribal cultures were not considered in terms of land assignment; every man is not a farmer. In addition, much of the land was too poor for farming and financial assistance was not available to help develop it into farm land. This created wide-spread poverty and destruction of human resources. Thus, it became evident that drastic reforms were needed.

The Wheeler-Howard Act of 1934, known as the Indian Reorganization Act, brought an end to the allotment policy. It brought benefits to some but was destructive to others in terms of their cultures. It encouraged tribal self-government, extended credit, improved educational and medical facilities, restored freedom of religion and promoted the revival of Indian cultures. This functioned until the advent of World War II after which there was a drastic reversal of government policy.

In 1953, two new measures were adopted with the ultimate goal of again speeding up assimilation and breaking down the remaining cultural bonds of the Indian. The first Public Law 280, authorized the states to assume jurisdiction over the Indian peoples on reservations in criminal and civil matters. This could be done without the consent of the Nations.

The second measure, the House Concurrent Resolution 108, declared the intent of Congress to terminate Federal trusteeship and services for the Nations. This measure led to the loss of tribal control of Indian lands. Congress selected the Nations to be terminated. Both laws have been rejected by the Six Nation Confederacy.

This new policy brought confusion to the Nations, who barely had begun to make use of their rights under the Indian Reorganization Act. The need to finance the previously Federal sponsored programs threatened many Indians with great financial loss. In spite of tribal resistance, however, termination has remained the official policy of the government for many years. Several Nations have been terminated with many of their members forced to relocate in urban areas.

One post-war program did benefit many Nations. In 1946, a special Indian Claims Commission was established. It was designed to rule on Indian claims of unjust land dealing in the past. It has awarded restitutions for lands taken illegally or where proper payment was not given. The Commission has met intermittently since its establishment.

In the last few years, attempts have been made to incorporate proposals of Indian leaders into Federal policy. New legislation has been proposed that the Bureau of Indian Affairs be transferred to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Thus, Indians would be entitled to receive the benefits of the many services and programs under the auspices of this department. Many decisions on this proposal are pending.

Congress has treated Indians as wards of the government. Most policies have been designed to destroy the established self-governing, self-sustaining, traditional Indian communities. These government policies have been administered by constantly changing commissioners and agents, who usually were insensitive to Indian ideologies. The most threatening of government policies are the various acts which were designed to terminate Indian land (12, 13).

Examples of Land Issues Affecting the Indians

The Seneca Indians, between 1797 and 1838, were forced to sell more than four million acres of land in Western and Central New York and received about \$228,000. On September 15, 1970, the Indian Claims Commission began collecting evidence to determine if the Indians were cheated. The commission is taking both legal and historical evidence into account in determining the value of the land.

During the Eisenhower Administration, plans were finalized to build the Kinzua Dam on treaty protected lands of the Senecas. The treaty of 1794, signed by George Washington, had guaranteed never to claim nor disturb the Seneca Nation.

However, the dam was built, but compensatory funds were not voted for the Senecas until they agreed to a demand that they prepare a program for termination. This could result in the loss of Seneca ownership of their land. The Senecas had received partial payment for their land with the stipulation that the United States government approve all proposals for the use of this money (11).

During the 1950's, the St. Lawrence Seaway Power Authority took a portion of the St. Regis reservation from both sides of the Canadian-American border. The St. Lawrence River needed widening, resulting in the confiscation of the Indian lands. The dredging procedure used to deepen the river upset the ecological balance. To some people it was called progress, to the Indian it was pollution. Ships coming up the river dump garbage, oil and other pollutants. Locks installed to control the height of the water further upset the balance of nature. Also, the giant turbines that generate electricity have chopped up many thousands of tons of fish. These fish lay dead or dying along the shores. The clay river bottom dug up during the dredging was put on Indian farm lands and apple orchards destroying the fertility of the soil. The non-Indian lands were restored as parks and public recreation areas; the Indian lands were left barren.

In the early 1960's, the New York State Power Authority purchased five hundred acres from the Tuscarora Reservation for the Niagara Power Project and the Indians received only \$800,000. In comparison, Niagara University sold two hundred acres of land to the State for approximately \$6,000,000. Indians received \$1,600 per acre in comparison to the \$30,000 per acre which the university received.

In the 1970's, New York State wanted to take more territory from the Onondaga Nation to widen Route 81, a portion of which passes through the Onondaga Nation. This attempt to gain control of additional Indian lands was successfully resisted by the Onondagas. However, the Onondaga Nation expects the State to resume their efforts to gain this territory.

Due to current litigation, many laws and land issues dealing with the Indian are unresolved; the assaults on Indian territory continues.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The survival of the first settlers would have been impossible without the assistance of the Indian. When the Europeans arrived, the Indian helped the white man adapt to foreign surroundings.

The Iroquois were primarily farmers whose agricultural techniques were a result of centuries of experimental farming. They made important contributions in techniques of fertilization. For example, fish were used to enrich the soil where the Three Sisters (corn, beans, squash) were cultivated. Some of the staples that were introduced to the European diet as a result of cultural exchanges besides the Three Sisters, were: pumpkins, potatoes, tomatoes, peanuts, coffee, tobacco, chewing gum, chocolate and popcorn. Over 60% of the world's food comes from the efforts of Indian agriculturalists who combined hybrids of various poisonous plants until they were edible. It is through their contributions that mankind today enjoys a healthy life.

Living in harmony with the natural world, the Iroquois were familiar with hundreds of herbs and plants that could be used as medicine. It was common knowledge that certain plants were useful as cathartics, pain relievers, cures for infections, etc. Many of these natural cures are still preferred today over man-made synthetic drugs. A few of these medicines are foxglove, used as a natural source of digitalis for treating heart disease, pine pitch for treating boils, sassafras tea used as a spring tonic and basswood to treat infections. Many Indian medicines are still being researched in an attempt to understand their curative powers. In recent times, with the emergence of the numerous psychiatric problems facing our society, attention has been paid to the practices of the Indian cures designed to improve a patient's health by restoring his harmony with the universe. Child psychologists, such as Eric Erickson, author of "Childhood in Society" and Dorothy Lee, author of "Freedom in Culture", refer to the Indian methods of raising, educating and disciplining youths as a model for modern parents and educators.

A functioning democratic form of government greeted the Europeans when they came to the New World. The Indian democratic system stems from Native American traditions and not from feudal Europe with its kings, nobles, and serfs. There were no Greek philosophers present in 1744 when the colonial governors met at Lancaster to treaty with the League of the Iroquois. Here, they were exposed to a working model of democracy, The Iroquois Confederacy. The Confederacy is a group of nations with separate homelands and different languages and sometimes even different cultural traditions, yet they were successful in establishing a government capable of uniting them to function as a single mind. This is a government with the source of power rising first and foremost from the people. It is both a direct and a representative democracy.

The manner in which the Iroquois governed themselves did not go unheeded by the colonists. When it came time to unite, Benjamin Franklin looked toward the Iroquois example of government as an inspiration for the Union. Chastizing the quarreling colonies at the Continental Congress in Albany, he said, "It would be a strange thing if Six Nations of ignorant savages should be capable of forming a scheme for such a Union and be able to execute it in such a manner that it has subsisted ages and appears indissolvable and yet, that a like Union should be impracticable for ten or a dozen colonies, to whom it is far more necessary and must be more advantageous, and who cannot be supposed to want an equal understanding of their interests."¹ It did not seem to bother Benjamin Franklin that his admonitions were couched in a curious contradiction of terms. On one hand he was denigrating the Indian people as savage, while on the other hand, he wanted the colonists to structure their government after that of the Iroquois Confederacy.

The democratic government established by the colonists was recognized by Europeans as attributable to the Native Peoples. This was evidenced in a popular account of life in America that was circulated in England.

"The darling passion of the American is liberty and that in its fullest extent; nor is it confined only to the original natives. Our colonists seem to have imbibed the same principles."²

It is apparent the Native American cultural influence is present in our society otherwise America would have remained an extension of Old World ideas and culture. There are still many lessons to be learned, when we look to the Native Americans, the Onghwehonweh, the Real People.

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INDIAN INTEREST ORGANIZATIONS

American Indian College Foundation
Charlottetown Mall
Charlotte, North Carolina 28200

American Indian Historical Society
1451 Masonic Avenue
San Francisco, California 94131

Arrow, Inc.
1166 Nineteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Association on American Indian Affairs,
Inc.
432 Park Avenue, South
New York, New York 10016

Education for American Indian Unit
Mrs. Helen M. Scheirbech, Director
United States Office of Education
Department of Health, Education and
Welfare
Washington, D.C. 20201

Indian Church of Buffalo
Reverend Edward Groat, Pastor
316 Breckenridge Street
Buffalo, New York 14213

The Indian Defense League of America
Post Office Box 305
Niagara Falls, New York

Indian Rights Association
1505 Race Street, Room 519
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102

Indians for Education
Mr. Charles Williams
Burning Springs Road
Perrysburg, New York

National Congress of American Indians
1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Indian Youth Council
Post Office Box 118
Schurz, Nevada 89427

Native American Cultural Awareness
Organization
Box 50
State University of New York at Buffalo
Norton Hall
Buffalo, New York 14214

North American Indian Club of Buffalo
Post Office Box 590 - Ellicott Station
Buffalo, New York 14205

Southwestern Association of Indian
Affairs, Inc.
Post Office Box 1964
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

United American Indians
Post Office Box 156
Santa Clara, California 95050

United Scholarship Service
1350 Pennsylvania Street
Denver, Colorado 80210

United States Department of Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Louis R. Bruce, Commissioner
Washington, D.C.

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Akwesasne Notes
c/o Mohawk Nation
Rooseveltown, New York 13683

Americans Before Columbus
National Indian Youth Council
3102 Central, S.E.
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87160

American Indian News
5 Tudor City Place
New York, New York 10017

Dine' Baa-Hane
P.O. Box 527
Fort Defiane, Navaho Nation
Arizona 86504

The Indian Historian
American Indian Historical Society
1451 Masonic Avenue
San Francisco, California 94117

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(Buffalo Board of Education - Audio Visual Department)
(Primary - Intermediate)

Indian Canoeman Color
(Buffalo Museum of Science)

Indian Dances
(Buffalo Museum of Science)

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(Buffalo Museum of Science)

The Longhouse People Color
(Buffalo Museum of Science)

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3. Nation Within a Nation - Indian Affairs (Buffalo Board of Education, Audio Visual Department)
4. Nation Within a Nation - Longhouse Religion (Buffalo Board of Education, Audio Visual Department) 30 minutes.
5. Nation Within a Nation - Legends (Buffalo Board of Education, Audio Visual Department) 30 minutes.

* (Originally recorded by W.B.U.F.) State University of New York
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